

**UNIFIED SAN DIEGO COUNTY
EMERGENCY SERVICES ORGANIZATION
OPERATIONAL AREA EMERGENCY PLAN**

ANNEX M

MENTAL HEALTH OPERATIONS

March 2000

UNIFIED SAN DIEGO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES ORGANIZATION

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UNIFIED SAN DIEGO COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES ORGANIZATION

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MENTAL HEALTH OPERATIONS

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ANNEX M

MENTAL HEALTH OPERATIONS

I. General

A. Goals and Strategies

The Mental Health Annex to the San Diego County Operational Area Emergency Plan describes the basic concepts, policies, and procedures for providing a coordinated mental health response to any disaster. This Annex serves as the unifying mental health document for the County of San Diego and the cities of the County, as authorized by the Emergency Services Agreement.

B. Purpose

To establish a disaster mental health response system and define responsibilities and actions required to ensure an efficient and effective use of mental health resources during a disaster.

C. Plan Activation

Upon activation, the Adult and Children's Directors, Mental Health Services, determine the extent of mental health services needed for the disaster and notify the appropriate Regional Managers and Division Chiefs.

The overall goal of the Mental Health Disaster Plan is to minimize loss of life, subsequent disability, and human suffering by ensuring timely and coordinated mental health assistance in time of emergency.

The strategies to accomplish this goal are:

1. Coordinate the utilization of mental health facilities and the procurement, allocation, and distribution of mental health personnel, supplies, and other resources.
2. Develop a system for county and contracted mental health staff to provide emergency mental health intervention services for disaster victims, emergency response personnel and the community in general.
3. Provide a system for receiving and disseminating mental health information necessary for effective response to and recovery from a major disaster.

D. Concept of Response

For the purpose of this Annex, a mental health disaster applies primarily to a major emergency situation or potential situation creating sufficient casualties or victims to necessitate a reorganization of day-to-day mental health operations which includes three levels of emergency response.

The three levels are based on the nature and severity of the situation and the availability of resources.

E. Plan Activation and Termination

Activation and termination of this Annex shall be by the direction of: (1) the County's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) in that capacity, or as Area Coordinator of the Unified San Diego County Emergency Services Organization; or (2) a designated Assistant CAO; or (3) the Director, Office of Disaster Preparedness or designated representative; or (4) the Directors, Mental Health Services or designated representative.

II. ORGANIZATION

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is key to successful response and recovery operations. With centralized decision making, personnel and other resources can be more effectively utilized. The coordinator of activities insures that all tasks are accomplished with little or no duplication of effort and with highest probability of success.

A. City Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs)

Each City has a central facility designated as an EOC. From the EOC, disaster operations are directed or coordinated. It is activated when a disaster occurs and is staffed by city employees from departments with emergency responsibilities, as well as liaison representatives from other agencies and jurisdictions. In each city, the City Manager is designated as Director of Emergency Services, by ordinance, and directs emergency operations from the EOC.

B. Operational Area Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

The County EOC serves as the Operational Area EOC. The Operational Area EOC serves the same function as the city EOCs (for the unincorporated areas), with the additional responsibilities of coordinating response activities throughout the entire Operational Area. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) serves as the Director of the Emergency Services for the unincorporated areas and as the Emergency Services Coordinator for the entire Operational Area.

The Operational Area EOC is located at the County Operations Center in Kearny Mesa and is used as the central point for resource acquisition and allocation, as well as coordination.

The Mental Health Section of the EOC (Attachment 1) is normally activated when the EOC is fully activated. It is staffed by pre-designated mental health personnel who coordinate, plan and evaluate the mental health response for the Operational Area. The EOC mental health staff serve as advisors to the CAO and make decisions about resource allocation and priorities, and other mental health matters.

1. Emergency Services Director/Coordinator - directs, or coordinates, the Emergency Services Organization and the emergency management program.

2. Director, Health and Human Services - reports to the CAO and is responsible for the overall management of all disaster health services to include Emergency Medical Services, Public Health Services, Environmental Health Services, and Mental Health Services.
3. San Diego County Mental Health Services, Adult and Children's Mental Health Directors - report to the Director, HHSA and are responsible for all long-range logistics planning and policy decisions for mental health services within the County.
4. San Diego County Mental Health Services (SDMHS) Disaster Coordinator - reports to the Deputy Director, Mental Health Services and is primarily responsible for providing and coordinating the provision of mental health services in the County. The Coordinator determines the need for mental health services and coordinates resource allocation. Additionally, the Coordinator works closely with medical, health, and care and shelter operations to coordinate activities.

III. Roles and Responsibilities

A. All SDMHS Programs

1. Prepare Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and functional checklists for mental health response to a disaster, including a system for automatic reporting of pre-designated personnel to assigned disaster posts.
2. Train personnel and alternates.
3. Maintain accurate records of all disaster-related activities.

B. Mental Health Services (Directors or Designees)

1. Responsible for updating this Mental Health Annex and other emergency mental health plans and procedures, as needed.
2. Coordinates, plans and evaluates disaster mental health operations within the County.
3. Coordinates the procurement and allocation of mental health resources required to support disaster operations.
4. Develops and maintains a capability for identifying mental health resources within the County.
5. Coordinates all county operated and contracted mental health-related activities among other local and private response agencies or groups, as well as state and federal agencies.
6. Coordinates requests and responses to requests with State Office of Emergency Services (OES) Region VI Disaster Medical Coordinator via County Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

C. SDMHS Disaster Coordinator

1. Responsible under the authority of the Adult and Children's Directors, Mental Health, for the overall administration and implementation of this Annex.
2. Chairs and organizes the Disaster Planning and Response Committee.
3. Maintains updated list of transportation and communication devices.
4. Establishes pre-disaster linkages with other agencies such as law enforcement, fire department, etc., to:
 - a. Inform them of SDMHS's Disaster Plan.
 - b. Disseminate printed information on psychological effects and management of disaster.
 - c. Participate in cross-training activities as needed and available.
5. Develops and maintains a radio communication system as back-up to the telephone system, to support disaster mental health operations.
6. Develops and maintains an inventory of all available staff and supplies.
7. Develops a network of mental health workers from other agencies, and private practitioners. These mental health workers will work with mental health staff in planning and providing mental health outreach services during and after a disaster.
8. Maintains a mental health disaster library.
9. Develops and coordinates post-disaster activities such as data collection for disaster relief funding, outreach, and follow-up programs.
10. Ensures that briefings and debriefings of response team(s) occurs.
11. Prepares Mental Health post-disaster summary report to include an evaluation of mental health activities and recommendations.

D. Clinical Director

1. Upon notification that disaster has occurred, Clinical Director and Disaster Coordinator will meet to plan appropriate next steps.
2. Advises and consults on clinical issues related to the disaster.

E. Administrative Services Organization Telephone (ASO) Crisis Line (24-hour telephone counseling services)

1. Provides emergency telephone counseling and referral to disaster victims seeking psychological services.
2. Acts as an entry point to the Mental Health system for persons seeking help.
3. Reports identified needs in the community for additional disaster-related services, to the SDMHS Disaster Coordinator.

F. Hospital Administrator

1. Activate hospital disaster plans.
2. Keep the SDMHS Disaster Coordinator informed of the general status of San Diego County Psychiatric Hospital and resource needs.
3. Provide available staff and resources to meet the larger mental health needs in the community.

G. Adult Regional Mental Health Program Coordinators and Service Chiefs

1. Maintain operation of the disaster mental health activities in their region/service area in support of the SDMHS Disaster Coordinator.
2. Maintain current listings of all Mental Health contract agencies within their region for purposes of disaster management.
3. Keep the SDMHS Disaster Coordinator informed of the general status of their region's situation and resource needs.
4. Continue the day-to-day operations of their regional/service area mental health programs, as appropriate.

H. SDMHS Staff

1. Be familiar with the contents of this plan.
2. Have in possession a valid County Identification Card, professional license, and other preparedness items as necessary.
3. See to the safety of themselves and their families in a disaster, then be prepared to fulfill their responsibility to the county.
4. Be available for call-back and monitor radio stations to keep informed of the situation.

5. Use discretion in reporting to regular work stations (e.g., road damage, other impending hazards).

IV. FUNCTIONS

A. Mental Health Facility Operations

The county is divided into Mental Health Regions. Each region is under the administration of a Mental Health Program Coordinator, who is responsible for the disaster mental health operations within the region. Located within these regions are a variety of Mental Health Facilities. During a disaster, the Facility Management takes the following types of actions:

1. Activates facility disaster plan.
2. Assesses the degree of damage to the facility.
3. Determines staffing needs and implements call-back procedures, if necessary.
4. Establishes a communication link between the facility and the Mental Health Disaster Coordinator.
5. If necessary, reorganizes regional and/or program operations to support county response.

B. Information and Education

Dissemination of information and education in the aftermath of a disaster with victims, emergency responders, and the community at large is accomplished in three ways:

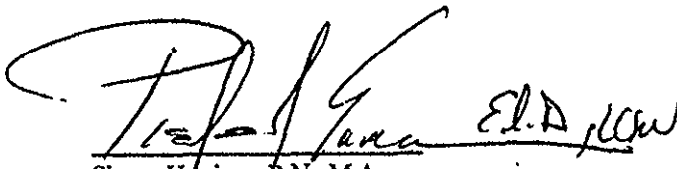
1. Broadcasting information about the immediate availability of mental health services.

In the first category, SDMHS cooperates with the Office of Disaster Preparedness and the Disaster Media Team to get public service messages to the media concerning the types of mental health services available and the location of these services.
2. Establishing an "information line" available for people to inquire about what specific mental health services are available and other details.
3. The Emergency Alert System (EAS), the Lifesaving Information For Emergencies (LIFE) system, radio, television, and newspapers are mechanisms by which disaster information is disseminated to the public. Posters, flyers, and other printed messages can also be used at disaster sites, emergency shelters and facilities.


4. Further contact through the media to educate the public about the psychological effects.

SDMHS will use the Administrative Services Organization Crisis Line telephone counseling service as the primary source for the public in need of mental health crisis intervention and for information. Educational material will be available on the psychological effects of a disaster and how to cope. The Crisis Line will be available on a 24-hour basis and is staffed by individuals trained in crisis intervention.

Authentication:

For 
Sherry Harrison, R.N., M.A.,
Adult Mental Health Director
San Diego County
Mental Health Services

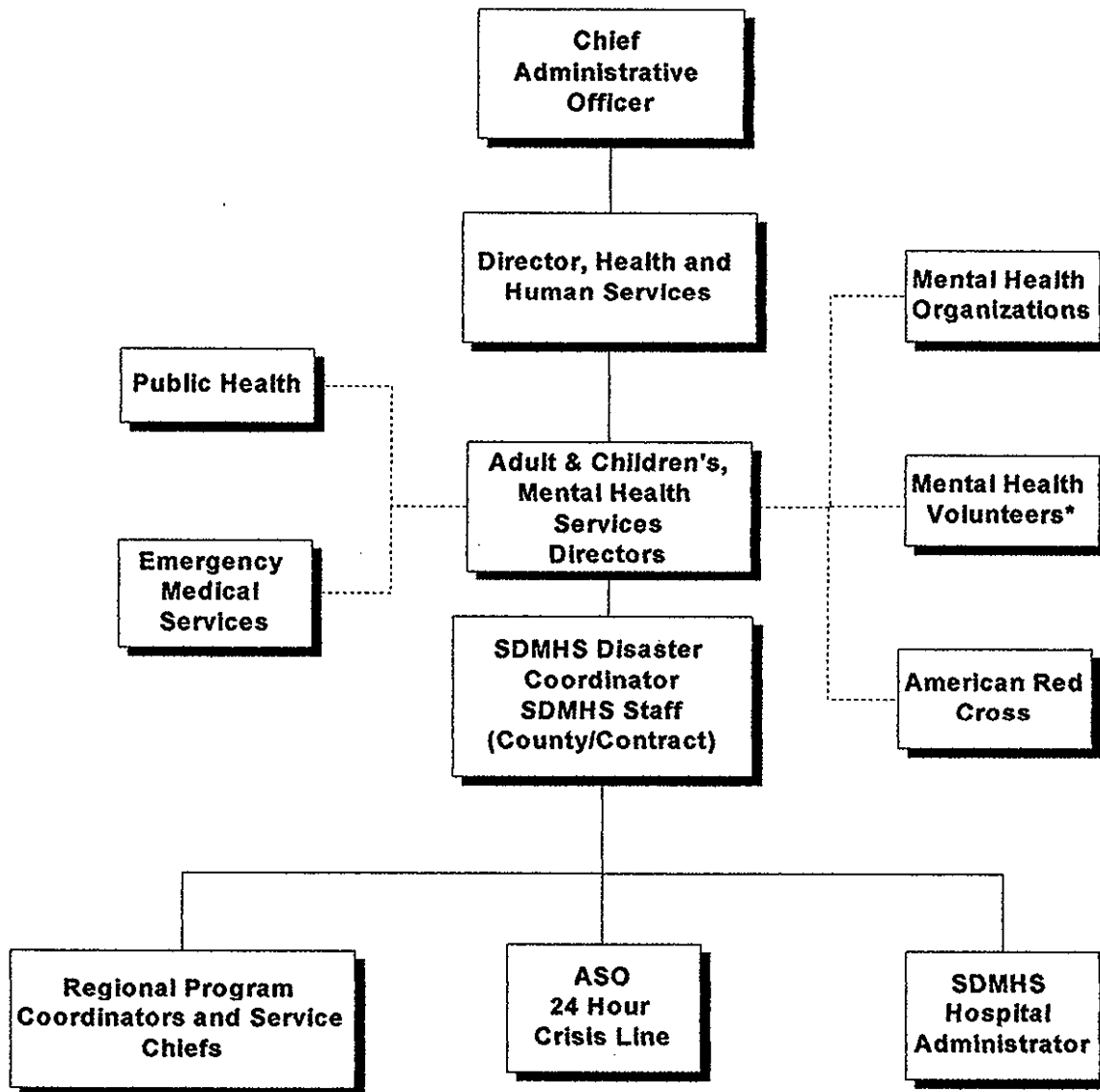
5/9/00
Date


Alfredo Aguirre, LCSW,
Child Mental Health Director
San Diego County
Mental Health Services

5-8-00
Date

Attachment 1

Mental Health Operations at the
Operational Area Emergency Operations Center



* Volunteers defined as those who have gone through County Approved Training

Attachment 2

**San Diego County
Mental Health Services**

Adult Mental Health Director
Sherry Harrison, R.N., M.A.
3851 Rosecrans Street
San Diego, CA 92110
(619) 692-5577
(619) 692-8674 - FAX

Child Mental Health Director
Alfredo Aguirre, LCSW
3851 Rosecrans Street
San Diego, CA 92110
(619) 692-5577
(619) 692-8674 - FAX

Disaster Coordinator
Linda Cannon
3851 Rosecrans Street
San Diego, CA 92110
(619) 692-5700
(619) 692-5729 - FAX

COUNTY-OPERATED MENTAL HEALTH CENTERS

NORTH COASTAL MENTAL HEALTH CENTER
1701 Mission Avenue, Suite A
Oceanside, CA 92054
(760) 967-4475

NORTH INLAND COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER
125 W. Mission Avenue, Ste. 103
Escondido, CA 92025 (760) 741-4461

CENTRAL REGIONAL SERVICES
1250 Morena Blvd.
San Diego, CA 92110
(619) 692-8750

EAST COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER
1000 Broadway, Suite 210
El Cajon, CA 92021
(619) 401-5500

SAN DIEGO COUNTY PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL
3853 Rosecrans Street
San Diego, CA 92110
(619) 692-8200

EMERGENCY SCREENING UNIT
730 Medical Center Court
Chula Vista, CA 91911
(619) 421-6900

FORENSIC MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
964 Fifth Avenue, Ste. 435
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 544-1435

SOUTH EAST MENTAL HEALTH CENTER
3177 Oceanview Blvd.
San Diego, CA 92113
(619) 595-4400